



Voluntary Pre-K (VPK) and Preschool Development Grant (PDG) Curriculum Review Team Solicitation

February 7, 2018

Tennessee Department of Education

Candice McQueen
Commissioner of Education

Elizabeth Alves
Assistant Commissioner

Darlene Estes-Del Re
Executive Director of the Office of Early Learning

Candace Cook
Director, Pre-K Programs

BACKGROUND

Voluntary Pre-K (VPK) refers to pre-K programs which are funded by state grants and serve students with educational risk factors, as outlined in Tenn. Code Annotated § 49-6-101 through 49-6-110. The Tennessee Department of Education oversees funding and monitoring of these programs.

Preschool Development Grant (PDG) refers to programs that are funded with federal grants and serve students with educational risk factors. The Tennessee Department of Education ("the State") and the US Department of Health and Human Services oversee funding and monitoring of these programs. The PDG grant received by the state of Tennessee is intended to expand pre-K access in Tennessee and increase the quality of the VPK program statewide.

Districts that are awarded state funding to administer a VPK program or a PDG program (referred to as "Program" throughout) are required to use curricula from the State's approved list of pre-K curriculum.

The State recently released a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the provision of VPK Instructional Materials and Training to VPK Programs and is now selecting individuals to review the RFP submissions (RFP 33132-00318) can be found here: <https://www.tn.gov/generalservices/procurement/central-procurement-office--cpo-/supplier-information/request-for-proposals-rfp-opportunities.html>). The State released this RFP to select curricula for the approved list that are research based, comprehensive, aligned to the Tennessee Early Learning and Developmental Standards (TN ELDS), developmentally appropriate, and meet the State's definition of "high quality". Since the passage of the Pre-K Quality Act of 2016, the Office of Early Learning (OEL) has worked to define the components of a high quality program, with the following goals in mind:

- To ensure use of research-based curricula that are aligned to TN ELDS and developmental science and has evidence of improved learning outcomes
- To improve the quality of teaching and learning in pre-k classrooms
- To increase the State's capacity to support professional development for implementation of high quality curricula
- To decrease variability in quality across pre-k classrooms
- To strengthen the transition between pre-k and K-3.

SOLICITATION INTRODUCTION

Up to fifteen individual contracts will be awarded for the purpose of reviewing and scoring vendor responses to RFP 33132-00318. The contract period for reviewers will begin March 1, 2018 and end on April 15, 2018. The total contract amount is not to exceed \$10,000 at a rate of \$30 per hour worked plus travel.

Contractors must meet the following minimum requirements:

- Be knowledgeable and experienced in early childhood education, curriculum and instruction, and be familiar with developmentally appropriate practice.
- Be available for three days of face-to-face training and curriculum evaluation between March 8 and March 10, 2018. If scoring is not complete by March 10, additional days between March 22 and March 24 may be requested

- Demonstrate an ability to use a rubric to evaluate and score curriculum materials;
- Demonstrate strong understanding of the purpose of curriculum and how it impacts instruction;

PURPOSES OF THE CURRICULUM REVIEW

Based on curriculum evaluation scores, the office of early learning will be able to:

- Identify up to three comprehensive, high quality curricula that will be recommended for use in all VPK and PDG classrooms.
- Enter into up to three no cost contracts with curriculum vendors, through which districts can purchase curricula.
- Meet the goals identified in this solicitation.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CONTRACTOR(S)

The contractor will be responsible for reviewing and scoring curriculum submissions using the solicitation rubric as trained during the face-to-face training. To ensure timely execution of contracts with curriculum vendors, the contractors complete all scoring no later than March 28, 2018. The contractors must sign a Conflict of Interest Disclosure Statement and a Confidentiality Statement for each curriculum they review. No one directly involved in writing a pre-K curriculum will be eligible to apply.

Hiring and Training Personnel

- The contractor(s) will not be responsible for hiring or training additional personnel.

Recruiter Responsibilities

- The contractor(s) will not be responsible for recruiting other personnel or services.

Trainings and Meetings

- The contractor(s) must be available for three days of face-to-face training and curriculum evaluation between March 8 and March 28, 2018.
- To ensure inter-rater reliability, the contractor(s) must attend training and participate in peer scoring and review.

Records and Reports

- The contractor(s) must return scoring documentation with specific feedback for each response scored.
- The contractor(s) must maintain confidentiality of scoring reports and responses at all times.
- The contractor(s) shall work in conjunction with the State to score responses and to complete all reports specified in the curriculum selection process.

HOW TO APPLY

Responses to this solicitation must include a letter of interest, detailed resume', two letters of recommendation, and a written response to the following question:

When making instructional planning decisions for an early childhood classroom, describe the relationship between developmental domains, approaches to instruction and curriculum implementation.

Responses must be submitted electronically to Candace.Cook@tn.gov no later than **5 p.m. CDT, February 21, 2018**. Written responses will be scored via a rubric and the highest scoring applicants will be selected for a phone interview, which will also be scored via a rubric.

If you have any questions, please contact Candace Cook at Candace.Cook@tn.gov.

The State reserves the right to determine, at its sole discretion, the appropriateness and adequacy of responses related to this solicitation. Contracts are subject to funds availability and final approval by the state procurement offices.